on 14th June, 2002, had demanded the Central Government to formulate a special agriculture policy for the North-East, giving due stress to the resources in the region and the rich prospects for horticulture there; and

(b) if so, what decision has been taken to modify the agriculture policy or to lay down a special agricultural policy for the North-Eastern Region in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) A two day Seminar on "Agricultural Development of Assam" was held on 24th and 25th June, 2002 at Guwahati. Farmers attending the seminar in Guwahati had not demanded the Central Government to formulating a Agriculture Policy for North East.

(b) Does not arise.

Rice to Andhra Pradesh

1792. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government released five lakh tonnes of additional rice under Sampoorna Grameen Samruddhi Yojana (SGSY) for Andhra Pradesh in June, 2002; and

(b) if so, the details of rice released for distribution to Andhra Pradesh since August, 2001, under the Food for Work and Sampoorna Grameen Samruddhi Yojana and the demand made by the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir, under the Special Component of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY).

(b) Since 1st August, 2001, 31.50 lakh MTs. of Rice has been released, which fully meets the demand of the State Government.

Food for Work scheme in Andhra Pradesh

1793. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central team which toured Andhra Pradesh in May, 2002 recommended continuation of Food for Work scheme in the State;

(b) if so, the main recommendations of the team ; and

(c) the action taken to implement the scheme more vigorously for drought prone districts of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) After the report of the Team, 10 lakh MTs. of Rice have been allocated to Andhra Pradesh for the months of May and June, 2002.

Independent agricultural insurance company

1794. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to set up an independent agricultural insurance company to provide insurance cover exclusively for the agriculture related issues across the country;

(b) if so, whether nearly 19 States, including Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Gujarat have agreed to participate in the agri insurance company;

(c) whether the above three States have registered one of the highest crop failures in the country; and

(d) if so, to what extent this insurance company would help farmers in the agriculture related issues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir, Public Sector General Insurance Companies and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) have decided to promote the new organization.

(b) All implementing States (21 States/UTs) including Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Gujarat have accepted in principal the need for setting up of a separate National Agricultural Insurance Company.

(c) A wide-spread failure of crops during Kharif—2000, in Gujarat had occurred and as a consequence thereof the highest amount of indemnity claims so far amounting to Rs. 768.92 crore were paid in Gujarat.